World Bank's assistance for removal of poverty

*414. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question No. 3184 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 19th December, 2000 and state:

(a) whether the World Bank President's commitment to raise Bank assistance to India to a level of US dollars three billion by 2001 has been fulfilled; and

(b) whether Government have taken steps to undertake a joint venture with the World Bank to study and carry out research for evolving IT applications to rural development and removal of poverty?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) The Country Assistance Strategy of the World Bank for Financial Year 2001-2002 finalised in March, 2001, after the visit of the World Bank President in November, 2000, envisages a base level commitment scenario of bank assistance of $3 billion per annum.

(b) Yes, Sir. Initial steps have been taken in this direction.

Prosecution of customs officials

*415. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the premises of some customs officials including Chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs were raided in the month of April, 2001;

(b) whether any properties have been recovered which were obtained illegally by the officials; and

(c) whether any prosecution has been launched against these officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) In April, 2001,